The Reconstructionist

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dicated to the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of rael's ancient homeland, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace.

the Reconstructionist

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EDITORIALS

TOWARD A NEW ZIONIST STRATEGY

A REFORMULATION of Zionist policy is called for by Bevin's proposal to refer the Palestine problem to UN and by the British government's manifest determination to seek an annulment of her obligation to "facilitate the achievement" of the Jewish national home. That reformulation will have to be made by the Zionist Executive now meeting in Eretz Yisrael. We can at the present moment only call attention to some of the realities with which Zionist statesmanship will have to reckon and suggest certain policies that seem to us necessary in the light of those realities.

We Zionists must bear in mind that, in the new situation, we will be dealing not with the League of Nations, which was committed to a pro-Zionist solution of the Palestine problem, but with the United Nations, which has no such commitment. The nearest approach to a commitment is contained in Article 80 of the UN Charter, which states that unless and until new trusteeeship agreements are adopted, "nothing in this chapter shall be construed in or of itself to alter in any manner the rights whatsoever of any states or any peoples or *the terms of existing international instruments to which members of the United Nations may respectively be parties.*" (Italics ours). This would seem to mean that the United Nations, in considering the problem of Palestine *de novo,* is not necessarily bound by the Mandate of the League of Nations, but that, until it reaches a final decision, it may not set up or approve any interim regime which violates the Mandate.

In view of this situation, it does not seem expedient for the Zionist Organization to press for an immediate determination of the ultimate political status of Palestine. There is danger that, in the present state of affairs, a decision in the United Nations would be determined by the competition of the Western and the Eastern powers for Arab favor rather than by considerations of justice or humanity. It would therefore seem wise for Zionists to defer for some future time discussion of the ultimate destiny of the Yishuv and to keep the situation fluid by demanding rather an honest fulfilment of the terms of the Mandate, the abrogation of the 1937 White Paper, the resumption of large-scale Jewish immigration, the removal of restrictions on Jewish land-purchase and a return to civil administration.

The second reality with which we must reckon is the desire of Great Britain to transfer to the United States a share of the burden of defending the Mediterranean world against the possible encroachments of a Russia-inspired com-

munism. President Truman has recommended to Congress that America give aid to Greece and Turkey which Great Britain has been giving until now.

In view of the mistakes and inequities of British imperialism in the Mediterranean area and the Near East, a natural American reaction, and one particularly natural to American Zionists, would be to say: "Why should we pull Great Britain's chestnuts out of the fire? She has made a mess of Greek affairs by supporting a decadent monarchical regime and now she hands over the mess to us and washes her hands of it. She is making daily a worse and worse mess of her control of Palestine and has the nerve, even while asking our government to bolster up her financial structure by taking over her commitments, to cast aspersions on our government's motives for making recommendations on the Palestine situation."

Nevertheless, America cannot escape the responsibilities which history has thrust upon her as the one strong democratic power in the world today. President Truman, in his address to Congress on American aid to Greece and Turkey defined our responsibility in unequivocal language. We cannot afford to permit a further spread of totalitarian regimes whether they be drawn along communist or fascist lines, particularly in regions where such regimes are a threat to democratic states that have been weakened by the war. There must be no return to American pre-war isolationism. We must help Greece get on her feet and Turkey remain on hers even if to do so means our falling heir to the consequences of British imperial misrule, consequences which we must do our best to mitigate and eventually to remove.

There is, however, justice to the slogan which, in an earlier age, the colonial ancestors of our Republic raised against England, the slogan "No taxation without representation!" But this time we must apply that slogan differently. We must insist on representation rather than exemption from taxation. We must show Great Britain that, while we are willing to carry the financial burdens which her own sacrifices during the war have made too heavy for her, we insist on our share of the authority that goes with responsibility. America should indeed help out in the Mediterranean and the Near East, but America has then the right and the duty to insist that its conceptions of what is needed for the welfare and peace of those regions and of the world in general be given the consideration that is their due. So far, Great Britain has flouted every suggestion made by our government with reference to Palestine. She must not be permitted to continue doing so.

The upshot of all the foregoing considerations is to commend the following line for present-day Zionist strategy:

(1) Zionists should stress the immediate need for a return to principles of the Mandate rather than striving for the realization in the near future of the goal set by the Biltmore platform.

(2) The Zionist Organization should not depend, however, on direct negotiations with the British government to persuade it to return to a faithful execution of its Mandatory obligations. Rather should the organization seek to induce the American government to accept and indeed, to demand a share in the determination of Near East policy proportionate to her new responsibilities. It may even be desirable for our government to share, with the consent of the United Nations, in the administration of the Mandate.

(3) Zionist propaganda in America should support the foreign policy of the

dministration as laid down in President Truman's address in Congress and should point to the role that the Yishuv can play as a bulwark of democracy against any form of totalitarianism in the Near East.

THE FAIR EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES BILL

THE fate of the Austin-Mahoney Bill in the New York State Legislature may be taken as an indication of the obstacles which similar measures may encounter elsewhere. When introduced in the New York State Legislature, the bill, which is directed against discrimination by colleges on racial and religious grounds, met with a well-nigh universal chorus of approval. If the State could outlaw discrimination in employment as it did in the Ives-Quinn Law, it could with equal logic and justice bar discrimination in that most fundamental concern of the State—education. Indeed, up to a fortnight ago, the passage of the measure seemed assured. Then suddenly a barrage of opposition was unloosed that has made the measure's enactment into law extremely dubious. One of the bill's sponsors, Mr. Mahoney, has already announced that he will not seek its passage at the present session of the Legislature. Other legislators have likewise experienced a swift change of heart. All this, be it noted, while protesting that the intent of the bill still has their undiminished support. Even those who had opposed it from the outset maintain that the purposes of the bill are admirable. Why then was the bill vociferously applauded and then swiftly shuttled?

The Catholic Church announced its opposition on two grounds. First, it could not subscribe to that portion of the preamble of the bill which declares education to be the concern of the state. The point of conflict here runs too deep to be explored in a few editorial paragraphs. But we may point out, in passing, that, in Catholic countries like Argentina, the Church is not averse to making even religious education a function of the State. Nevertheless, to meet Catholic objections, the sponsors of the bill quickly modified the preamble by removing the phraseology to which the spokesmen for the Church took exception. But what were the sponsors to do with the second reason for opposing the bill, the argument that it was but another avenue for the infiltration of "communistic ideas" into our public schools? Naturally, they ignored it. Not so the Albany legislators. They were evidently impressed to the point of shelving the whole measure. Once again, the cry of "wolf!" succeeded.

Any attempt to make of our democracy a forward, ongoing process is likely, from now on, to meet with the same cry. In the general atmosphere of tension generated by the East versus West international lineup, all liberal legislation is sure to be characterized as a "communist stalking horse," no matter how far short of the truth that characterization falls. When men are frightened, "the sound of a driven leaf shall chase them." Yet only a democracy that functions on all levels—educational and economic as well as political—can successfully counteract the illusory freedom and democracy held out by communism.

The opposition of the New York Association of Colleges is not difficult to understand. The prospect of official investigation, drawn-out hearings and court action is not an inviting one for any college president, even for the head of an institution that is free from discrimination. Nevertheless, these gentlemen should be the first to throw their support behind the measure. If democracy is not practiced where it is taught, the battle is lost

before it has begun. And there are, alas, grounds for the belief that democracy is not practiced in our colleges. How else can we interpret the fact that 19 colleges out of 26 in New York State ask such leading questions on their admission blanks as the applicant's religion, parents' birthplace and mother's maiden name.

The suggestion that the bill be referred to the Young Commission, appointed to investigate the advisability of establishing a State University, is nothing more than a diversionary tactic. A State University will undoubtedly bring many benefits to the citizens of New York. But one thing it cannot do. It cannot put an end to discriminatory practices on the part of existing colleges. If anything, it may furnish college administrations that are guilty of discrimination with a cheap salve for their consciences. That a public institution exists for those barred by private colleges may serve those colleges as an excuse for excluding students on racial and religious grounds. But such an excuse is a mere pretext. It is as if a taxi driver refused to accept certain passengers on the ground that there was a nearby subway available for public transportation.

Whatever the fate of the bill in the present session of the Legislature, the campaign for its eventual enactment must be carried forward. The American Jewish Congress is to be commended for the wide public support it has so far rallied around the measure. Let it keep public interest in the measure alive until its enactment is achieved.

THE ROLE OF THE CANTOR IN MODERN JEWISH LIFE

ON Wednesday, February 26, the United Synagogue of America sponsored a special conference on music in the synagogue. One of the resolutions adopted by the conference asked that the Jewish Theological Seminary of America organize a school for Cantors to supply the need of United Synagogue Congregations and others for musical instruction and direction. The need is a real one; the suggestion is a good one; but before proceding to its implementation, thought must be given to the role of the cantor in the modern Jewish community. For only by an adequate understanding of the musical needs of the community is it possible to determine what duties the cantor of the future should be prepared to perform and what training he will need to qualify him for his professional tasks.

Congregations ought certainly to have cantors who can sing pleasantly, who can conduct a choir and sing with a choir, who can teach congregational singing, and lead in congregational singing. The Jewish community has also many other needs for musical instruction and direction. Young parents need to be taught the kind of music they can use at home with their children on *Shabbat* and the holidays and on various other occasions in the course of the children's life. The school needs some one who will be able to conduct singing at assemblies and to coach musical performances on special occasions. The adolescents and young people ought to do much singing together, and somebody ought to know how to lead them in such singing in accordance with their particular tastes. Many Jewish families today are purchasing records and books on music and they need to be guided in their choice. In the larger communities people usually like to know which concerts of Jewish interest to attend, and need some one to whom they can turn for advice.

The congregation, therefore, needs more than a modernized version of the traditional cantor, more, that is, than

cantor with a modern musical education; it requires a *Jewish musical personality,* an individual who is not necessarily a great genius as composer or conductor, but a practitioner of Jewish music in much the same way as the rabbi is a general practitioner in the spiritual, religious, and educational realm. The musical personality must be versatile and adapted to various types of work. He must be familiar with the interests and needs of the people, and he must be able to come close to them and to bring them his own musical appreciation and sensitivity.

Judaism as a religion and as a culture can be experienced intellectually and emotionally. The Jew who enjoys both experiences truly understands what it means to be a Jew. Those who are only intellectually convinced and not emotionally stirred are missing a great deal, and music is one of the most potent means of stirring the Jew emotionally. Particularly at this time when the intellect offers so few adequate answers to problems, it may very well be that the answer to the eternal question, just as in the Yiddish song, *"Die Alte Kashe,"* may be just *"bim bam,"* that is to say, a musical affirmation of all that we believe in and stand for. The Jewish musical personality who is properly trained for his task has a rare opportunity to be of service to his people. But he must be *more than cantor,* more than conductor or composer; he must be the bearer and the tansmitter of the Jewish musical experience to the common man.

REALITIES AND VALUES

THE BRITISH COMMANDER IN Palestine, Lieutenant General G. H. A. MacMillan, recently declared that the word "terrorist" would hereafter be banned from the vocabulary of the British army. The word, he claims, has too glamorous a connotation. Hereafter those guilty of violent acts against the government forces would be referred to as "murderers, felons and common thugs."

Lieut. Gen. MacMillan did not stop to reflect on how "terrorist" came to acquire its glamorous connotation. What it denotes, in its simple literal meaning, is something wholly abhorrent to decent people. But somehow any epithet that one applies to people who risk their lives in the interest of a worthy cause, even if the means they employ are reprehensible, acquires an honorific connotation. If the "terrorists" are hereafter to be called "murderers, felons and thugs," these terms too will become glamorous by association.

There is really only one effective way to dispel the aura of heroism that attaches to the terrorists. A return to a government that respects civil liberties and public covenants would make any act of violence or prepetrator of such an act detestable to the general public.

THE JEWS OF PALESTINE WILL be represented by four delegates at the Pan-Asiatic Congress in New Delhi, India. This modest item of news may, in the course of history, turn out to be an important milestone.

There can be no doubt that the peoples of Asia, once they acquire Western science and technology—and they are acquiring these very fast—will develop civilizations rivaling those of the West. When that takes place, the Jewish people may again be called upon to play the role which, by reason of its wide dispersion and international contacts, it has so often played in the past, that of intermediator between different civilizations. We may help to bring the values of occidental civilizations to the orient and of oriental civilizations to the occident.

That role will henceforeth assume a greater importance than ever because of mankind's growing need for world unity and international and interracial understanding.

▼

THE WORLD JEWISH CONgress, through its secretary-general, Dr. Leon Kubowitzki, has made a suggestion which, if adopted, may prove an important first step toward the protection of oppressed minorities everywhere. The proposal was made in connection with the opening in Geneva of a two-day meeting of the International Red Cross to study revision of the humanitarian clauses in its charter.

Dr. Kubowitzki proposes that the Red Cross be authorized to extend protection to civilians who are segregated, confined or interned. Millions of Jews lost their lives largely because there was no international agency to visit and inspect the concentration and death camps. This protection, he says, "should be mandatory at any time and . . . such persecutees be entitled to be treated as prisoners of war."

We suppose that it would be made mandatory through international conventions drafted by the UN in fulfilment of its purpose to implement an international bill of rights.

▼

WE WANT TO COMMEND THE Commission of Law and Social Action of the American Jewish Congress for publishing the pamphlet, "American Ghettos" by Elmer Gertz, and, in general, for its vigorous campaign against restrictive covenants in real estate transactions.

The Congress is the more to be praised because the practice which it condemns, of making agreements not to rent or lease property to members of specified racial or religious groups, is one in which Jews are involved not merely as victims but also as perpetrators. Jewish owners of real estate are as reluctant as non-Jews to suffer a deterioration of the value of their properties through the influx into a neighborhood of persons whom prevailing prejudices regard as undesirable. For the Congress boldly to put principle above the material interests of wealthy contributors, actual and potential, does honor to the Congress and to the Jewish community.

▼

WE HAVE RECEIVED AN INTEResting little pamphlet, "Statistically Speaking," which contains demographic information graphically presented about the Jews of Jacksonville, Fla. It is published by the local Jewish Community Council and gives information on the numbers of Jews, their proportion to the total population, their marital status, the proportion of native to foreign born among them, their distribution by sex, age and occupation, their congregational and institutional affiliations, their educational status and the like.

Though covering only a few pages, the pamphlet represents the work of twenty volunteers working for many months under the direction of William I. Boxerman, the Executive Director of the Council. A house to house canvass of 100 city blocks was part of the labor that went into the pamphlet's preparation. Mr. Boxerman is now preparing an analysis of the information so gathered together with historical data about the Jacksonville Jewish community which the Jewish Community Council will publish in book-length format.

We have frequently had occasion to call attention to the need and the woeful lack of adequate Jewish statistics. That need will not be satisfied until every Jewish community makes such studies as that

(*Continued on Page* 24)

On "Vitalizing the Jewish Curriculum"—A Reply to Rabbi Barack

By WILLIAM CHOMSKY

THE periodic attacks on the primacy of Hebrew in the Jewish curriculum seem to be chronic. They recur with almost cyclic regularity. The arguments follow a rather definite pattern. Hebrew, it is conceded, is important. It is "the holy tongue," the language in which the Bible was written, etc., etc. . . . But after all, language is only a medium, a means to an end, that is, to the development of a fuller Jewish life in America. Since the achievement of this end through the medium of Hebrew has proved unsuccessful, let us drop this medium and seek another and more effective one.

Summary of Rabbi Barack's Views

This is in substance the line of reasoning followed by Rabbi Nathan A. Barack, in an article under the challenging title "Vitalize Jewish Education" (*The Reconstructionist,* Vol. XII, No. 15, Nov. 29, 1946). Judaism in America, contends Rabbi Barack, lacks popular support. The masses do not understand it and do not practice it, with the result that "religious life does not extend far beyond the periphery of the circle of our professional leaders and functions almost within a cultural vacuum." And what is to blame for all this? The answer is clear in the Rabbi's mind. Our pupils find the study of Hebrew too burdensome and alien to their environment.

The remedy, then, is quite obvious. Eliminate Hebrew, and, presto, the problem is solved. We can then make "Judaism" popular. We shall devise a "new" curriculum consisting "of English courses in Religion, Literature, History, etc." Our schools and synagogues will then be filled to capacity with those thirsty for the word of God, and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

This "new" curriculum will also provide for instruction in mechanical reading of Hebrew, which should be "progressively (sic!) taught." Only children endowed with a special aptitude or inclination for language study should be exposed to an "advanced Hebrew education."

Rabbi Barack's Ideas Not New

One could, of course, refer to, at least, a dozen such challenges, buttressed by the same or similar arguments, presented even more elaborately and more effectively during the last two or three decades. It is also possible to recall and refer to several experiments with Jewish curricula in English which have proved totally ineffectual and have failed to attract the expected masses of pupils. Neither parents nor children seem to be interested in a "Sunday School" which holds sessions more than once a week. If Rabbi Barack read *The Reconstructionist* carefully during the last several years he would recall that his "new" ideas were discussed and debated in the pages of this magazine. (See *The Reconstructionist,* Vol. VIII, No. 3 and Vol. IX, No. 10 and No. 12.) I can see no new light shed on this issue in the present article by Rabbi Barack.

Indeed, I find it somewhat tiresome to return to this rather hackneyed subject. But I am aware that human memories are short, and failure to take up this new challenge by a contributing editor of *The Reconstructionist* might be construed as a tacit acquiescence and might induce

confusion in the minds of the wavering and uninitiated. Our Hebraic program is not sound enough and not firmly enough established to be able to resist any attacks feeble as they may be.

Let us examine then Rabbi Barack's arguments and attempt to evaluate them as objectively as possible.

Hebrew No Mere Means to a Jewish Life

His basic thesis is that the Hebrew language is merely a medium, a means to the promotion of Jewish life and that "Hebrew . . . despite its demonstrated significance, is not identifiable with our religious and cultural values." This oft-repeated contention is utterly fallacious. We meet here again the old ghost of the dichotomy of form and content or body and spirit—a concept which is totally alien to the genius of Jewish tradition and utterly untenable in the light of modern scientific thinking.

No, Hebrew is not just a medium of our religious and cultural values, it is an integral part of these values. Judaism is not just a body of beliefs, ideas and ideals, which may be transmitted in any language. It is an intellectual and emotional historical experience, the instrumentality of which is Hebrew. Language and experience are inextricably compounded. The Jewish way of life is a pattern constituting religious and cultural values, or Torah, rooted in the Hebrew language, as well as lines of conduct in consonance with these values. Remove one element of the pattern and the whole pattern is destroyed. The Jewish way of life without Torah is inconceivable; and so is Torah without Hebrew, or Hebrew without Torah. Torah without Hebrew is a disembodied soul, Hebrew without Torah is an empty shell. Both are out of the pale of Jewish tradition.

Hebrew Indispensable to Jewish Survival

The attempt to promote a Jewish way of life without Hebrew, or with the dilution of the Hebrew element, is like attempting to retain the wine while breaking its receptacle; it cannot be done. It has been attempted and has failed. Jewish history can record examples of casualties in such attempts. Witness the fate of Alexandrian Jewry during the Hellenistic period, as well as that of the pre-Hitler German Jewish community. Elimination of Hebrew does not attract the masses to Judaism; it opens the door wide for assimilation and leads to ultimate extinction.

Rabbi Barack admits that "the wave of fascist anti-Semitism . . . has intensified the nationalism of some Jews, and it has driven others to seek a deepening of their religious life. The increased interest in religion and nationalism has led even individuals who had formerly looked askance at the study of Hebrew to view it more favorably." Indeed, the study of Hebrew has become quite popular among many Jewish adults in recent days, whatever the reasons may be. Intuitively Jews have always felt that a return to Judaism implies a return to Hebrew. Their heart-strings vibrate to the rhythm of the ancient sounds; and by using these sounds they feel as if they strike chords resonant with ancient memories, past glories, national joys and sorrows, historical hopes and aspirations. They will never react the same way to courses in English on Jewish religion, literature and history.

The Failure of Our Schools Not Due to Emphasis on Hebrew

Rabbi Barack's suggestion that we select pupils especially gifted with linguistic aptitude and with a desire to learn Hebrew may sound good on the surface, but it is fraught with dangerous implications.

How does he propose to select these pupils? He seems to think that a child may be intellectually alert, yet lack a language aptitude. Such an assumption is without foundation. Intelligence is believed to be generalized, and there is no evidence of the existence of a special native linguistic aptitude. Whether an alert-minded youngster will or will not take to Hebrew depends on the teacher, the method and the program. When properly stimulated, he will certainly not fail to make the desired response. This notion of a special linguistic aptitude may serve as a dangerous alibi and refuge for inefficient teaching or inadequate educational programs. Any child who fails to respond because he is not adequately motivated will be stigmatized as lacking in a linguistic aptitude. The number of those who will survive will probably be negligible.

We are, of course, far from being satisfied with the present results in our Jewish educational efforts. Our failure is flagrant, and we dare not shut our eyes and expose ourselves to self-deception. But this failure is not inherent in our Hebraic program. We are lacking in adequate teaching personnel, in educational materials, in a scientific methodology, and in a definite and clear philosophy of aims and objectives. I dealt with this subject elsewhere, and I cannot enter into this discussion here. We must make a more searching analysis of aims and objectives. We must seek to devise more economic and more efficient methods in harmony with children's interest and needs. We must produce better and more interesting materials. Last, but not least, we must provide conditions for attracting and holding capable and well-trained men and women in our profession.

The responsibility for the failures in Jewish education rests with the rabbis, educators and communal leaders. The obligation to improve it is theirs. They dare not shirk it and look for alibis, scapegoats and quack medicines. Only a candid recognition of the situation and a sincere desire and effort to remedy it will produce the desired results.

Not New But True—A Rejoinder to Dr. Chomsky

By NATHAN BARACK

DR. Chomsky is right. My article is brief and could be far more effective. The suggestions are also essentially not new. However, I did not say that Hebrew should be dropped as a medium of instruction. Nor did I imply that the mere institution of the suggested system would bring about a spiritual and cultural revolution in the Jewish community. Let the reader who is interested reread my article, as I have Dr. Chomsky's several articles and judge for himself.

I was released from the army shortly before the High Holidays, and did not have time to revise the article, originally written in 1939, as I would have desired. Even now time does not allow me to answer Dr. Chomsky as fully as so earnest a Hebraist and educator deserves.

The Appeal to Experience

Truth does not become hackneyed. If the suggested system is valid today, its truth is not diminished by the fact that it has been proposed before. We Jews have a tradition for repeating that which

we believe in the hope that eventually it will be adopted. Let Dr. Chomsky show where the all-Hebrew system has succeeded, and if not, why the improvements that he suggests in his articles have not been tried by like-minded educators. Let him explain why (as he admits in Vol. VIII, No. 18 of *The Reconstructionist*) even "that very small proportion of those who graduate from our high schools or colleges come out without an abiding interest in Jewish studies and without a deep-rooted impulse to pursue the knowledge of Hebrew and its literature." One wonders why "their heartstrings" do not "vibrate to the rythm of the ancient sounds," and why "by using the sounds" they do not "feel as if they strike chords resonant with ancient memories, past glories, national joys and sorrows, historical hopes and aspirations." Let Dr. Chomsky also cite facts where and when and on what scale our suggested system was tried and failed.

No one denies the primary importance of Hebrew. Yet the Talmud rules, *"Shema —bekol lashon she-atta shomea,"* ("The *Shema* may be recited in any language one understands"). It might also be that Alexandrian Jewry succumbed for the same reasons that Hebraic centers did not survive. Abandonment of Hebrew, if that is what actually occurred, was rather an effect than a cause. On the other hand Yiddish, a non-Hebrew language, has certainly been a remarkable cultural medium for our people. Jewish life has seldom been as rich as in the Russian ghetto, and even there many Jews, if not the majority, knew Hebrew only as a medium of prayer. Nevertheless, they practiced and loved Judaism.

Our suggested system, we believe, has been tried successfully in Minneapolis, if their "dual system" corresponds to the program we have outlined. Its purpose would be to elevate our Jewish community from its "state of spiritual anemia," in the words of Dr. Chomsky (*Reconstructionist* Vol. X, No. 2), and to give it the knowledge of "the spiritual values and traditional heritage" of which it is "lamentably ignorant." It is true that some people are fluent in languages and are not necessarily thinking and conscientious individuals. For proof, behold some of our public servants and columnists. It is also true that Jewish cultural concepts, in translated versions, have impressed deeply such fine minds as the late Justice Brandeis, and Waldo Frank.

Value of Hebrew Not Minimized

According to our system, Hebrew as a *national* language would not be minimized. The group of students to be given an advanced Hebrew education would be selected on the basis of "linguistic inclination *and home atmosphere and interest.*" Because Jewish religious and cultural values would be known by many more persons than at present, our Hebraists would be induced "to make Hebrew literature a living aspect of their cultural life." Furthermore, the reading knowledge of Hebrew (progressively taught—with the prayers *interpreted,* and sung, with key words and phrases pointed out for memorizing, etc.), and with religious emotion aroused, would cause the psychological positive response that Dr. Chomsky says the sound of Hebrew evokes.

In conclusion, we do not believe that education alone can cure our social and religious ills. Many Hebrew scholars and writers have drifted far from Jewish religious values. We do believe that "the greater knowledge disseminated by the revitalized schools would create a more responsive atmosphere for the fellowships," which must be established by those who believe in Judaism profoundly, to recreate a vital religious Jewish life. In this case, it will be quality and not quantity that will decide the course of the future survival and development of Judaism.

The Common Sense of Religious Faith

By MILTON STEINBERG

PART III—THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS FAITH

This is the third and last of the series of articles by Dr. Steinberg. The first of the series discussed "The Importance of Religious Faith," as satisfying human needs which cannot be satisfied by science alone. The second discussed "The Reasons for Religious Faith"—intellectual, emotional, ethical, historical and mystical. This last article of the series discusses the nature of faith and its relation to certainty and conviction.

A Parenthesis Concerning Truth and Proof

IN previous issues the logic of the theistic position has been presented. The nature of the world, the course of history and, for the mystic at least, the evidences of mysticism argue for God. The needs of human morale and morality make the God-faith desirable, even pragmatically necessary. But "argue for," "desirable," "pragmatically necessary" are not *proof*. And is it not proof which men want?

If the reader is asking for an indisputable case for God's existence, he will not find it here. Neither theism nor atheism is susceptible to final and unquestionable demonstration.

But then, nothing is. There is not a single proposition of any sort which can be established beyond challenge. The intellect never leads to absolute certainty. As Bergson put it so aptly: "One can always reason with reason."

From modern philosophy we have learned that the reality of the physical world cannot be verified, nor, if it exists, that it conforms to our notions of it. The deductive sciences—logic and mathematics for instance—begin with axioms and postulates, so that any conclusions they reach are contingent ultimately on assumptions. That is why Euclid's geometry is no "truer" than any of the non-Euclidian systems, since all alike begin with intellectual "acts of faith."

And as for the physical sciences, from physics to sociology, these are of hypothesis all compact. They posit the knowability of nature, its uniformity and innumerable more limited postulates. They take for granted concepts such as causality, matter, energy, time and space, ideas which are shot through with unresolved enigmas. And then, after all these assumptions, the empirical sciences achieve at best, as the scientist will be the first to admit, not certainty, but probability, more or less high.

In a word, intellectual finality exists nowhere, not even in the most exact of sciences. Nothing can be so proved as to be beyond dispute.

What then remains for men? They must do as best they can with what they have. Whether they be ordinary folk trying to make up their minds about some simple issue, or scientists weighing alternative theories, or all of us hesitating between religion, and irreligion, they cannot do other than look at the various possibilities, select the best and take that for the truth.

Such is the procedure of the scientist. Knowing that no absolute demonstration is attainable, he does not waste himself trying to achieve one. Instead he frames a *hypothesis*. That is to say, he studies his facts, considers the theories which apply, and posits as true the one which covers the facts best, works out best and is the simplest.

Which, in a different field, is exactly what we have done. Confronted by a

choice between the theistic and atheistic views, we have adopted the former.

It fits better.

It works better, both for morale and morality.

It is simplest; with one concept it unifies reality and makes it intelligible.

Or, to restate the point in formal, philosophical language: religious faith is a hypothesis interpreting reality and posited on the same grounds as any valid hypothesis, viz., superior congruity with the facts, greater practicality, and maximal conceptual economy.

Does this sound awesome and far removed from religion as we know it? Let us not be dismayed. All we are doing is to put into technical terms what all religionists have always said: that religion is in the end a matter of faith, and that that faith, far from being blind, arbitrary or merely wishful, is indicated by compelling reasons, intellectual, practical, emotional.

The Possibility of Error

This is not to say that theology is intellectually as exact or certain as is science, even if both are arrived at by the same general commonsensicality. (For that matter a scientific theory in turn is less sure than the sense data it is devised to account for). The hazards increase as one mounts upward in the edifice of the intellect, for at any level there will be present the risks of error implicit in that level plus all those in all the levels below. The higher one climbs, the further he may fall. But then the view is almost certain to be better, the climate more healthful and directions more clearly discernible.

The possibility remains however—and every religious person must face up to it—that, despite the preponderance of evidence in its favor, the theistic conclusion may be mistaken. One takes a chance with God. But, if so, it is a chance that has to be taken for the sake of head, heart, life itself.

Besides, who ever said that religion was something tame or safe? To the contrary, it is the greatest adventure of the human spirit, the boldest leap the soul can make; it is a man betting his life, with the evidences in his favor to be sure, but still betting his life, that things—the universe, ideals, the very life he is wagering—make sense and good sense to boot.

The Mechanics of Conviction

But if there is an admitted risk to faith, what about solidity of conviction? Is the religious person condemned to an everlasting tentativeness about what he believes?

Not at all. Firmness of opinion is attainable. Not on the basis of logic unaided, since, as we have already seen, argument is never definitive. But confidence fortunately comes from the heart rather than the head; it is an emotion rather than a proposition. It can be induced.

First, a man must purify his belief of logical and factual impossibilities, making it the most plausible belief available to him. For, if constancy in conviction is not to be fashioned in the intellect alone, it most certainly cannot be won, at least not by thinking moderns, without it, let alone in opposition to it.

Next, he must make up his mind. He commits himself, saying: "In view of the evidences and my needs, this is the position I adopt."

Then he lives by his decision. Only as he lives by it, is sureness distilled within him. The view he has accepted becomes habitual with him; it is imprinted ever deeper on his consciousness by familiarity and, more effectively, by the cumulative evidences of its adequacy and value—until, in the end, though he can envisage other possibilities and though, as is inevitable, his moods go up and down, this

emerges as the only position possible for him.

Acquiring faith, in other words, is only in part like proving a proposition in geometry. Equally, perhaps more, it is like falling in love. First the mind must assent; the fervor however wells from the heart, and the certainty, whether in marriage or religion, is the final upshot of the mind's assent, the heart's fervor, all confirmed and deepened to immovability by the testimony of the years.

Envisaging God

The Jewish tradition makes no attempt to enforce a particular conception of God. Within Judaism, God has been envisaged as a Mind apart from and contemplating the world; or as a Spirit within it, as both, or in any number of other guises. In this respect, each Jew is left to his own needs and preferences.

And yet, the reader who has followed our argument to this point may, especially if he be a stranger to religious speculation, lack the materials and skill to fashion a God-conception for himself. Conceivably, it would be helpful to him were some typical God-idea to be put before him, if only as an object of study. To this purpose, let me submit the particular envisagement I know best and most intimately, my own.

To me, whatever is is the outer shell of a Spirit. That spirit is the essence and ground of all things, sustaining and animating them, yet not exhausted by their totality.

Very often, I think of the world in relation to God in a parable. I imagine a mighty river with currents, waves, ripples, bubbles. Each current, wave, ripple, bubble, I recognize, has an independent existence. Yet each is but part of the stream and carried along by it in its course. What is more, there is more to the river, depths below depths, than is visible to my eyes.

As are the waves, ripples, bubbles to the river, so all things stand vis à vis God. Each has its individual identity. Yet each is but a manifestation of Him, pervaded by Him, existing only by virtue of Him, moving with His purposes. Touch anything and you may say: He is here. Yet add all things together and you will not have Him, for He is more than the world.

When I describe God as Spirit, I mean that He is not only a Power but a "Mind." His nature, in other words, is akin to our own. He is rational, which is why the universe is law-abiding. He is conscious with a consciousness like, though infinitely greater, than ours. Indeed He is the source of human consciousness, our private minds being individualizations of Him, sparks as it were of His fire.

When I speak of God as Spirit, I mean further that He is purposive. Whatever the case elsewhere in space, on our planet He has worked through inorganic nature to the plant, thence to the animal, thence to man, through whom He is now driving toward ever increasing freedom, justice and mercy, or, to use a good old theological phrase, toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

And man, how do I picture his role in this design? Man, I believe with the ancient rabbis, is a "partner with the Holy One, blessed be He," laboring with the God he incarnates toward ever increasing truth and goodness, toward, in sum, the realization of the cosmic design.

Of my specimen God-idea it should be observed that, without violating in the least the scientific description of the world, it yet satisfies all the needs for which a God-faith is posited to begin with. It accounts for the universe in its most challenging traits: the unity, dynamism, rationality, purposiveness and consciousness in things; it invigorates human

morale; it projects and supports morality; it makes the movement of history intelligible; it provides a possible explanation for the mystical experience; it gives hope and direction to life.

Yet this, be it recalled, is not an authoritative or even a recommended envisagement. It is presented only as a specimen to be considered, dissected, learned from, improved upon.

Judaism has never looked sympathetically on the notion that one man can save another's soul. It has no doctrine of vicarious salvation. What is true of man's moral pilgrimage is equally true of his intellectual quest. A man may assist his fellows, but no one can find God or fashion a conception of Him for anyone else. Each man in this respect must redeem himself. He must venture the peril and heartbreak but also the glory and deliverance of finding God in his own way, after his own spirit.

Faith and Judaism

This discussion of the commonsensicality of religious belief would not be complete without reference to one additional reason for faith, relevant only to Jews. I refer to the fact that with faith a Jew is thoroughly at home in his Jewishness, without it always something of a stranger.

The Jew without religious belief, whether he is without it because he has simply neglected to cultivate it or because he is honestly incapable of it, is in a sorry case—as a human being, in the first instance, but more specifically as a Jew. He will read and revere Scripture but disavow its key thesis. He may observe rituals but be out of harmony with their point. He is unfortunate. Yet, given his intellectual constitution and the requirements of integrity, he may have no choice save to accept his disabilities and get along with them as best he can.

But for the Jew capable of belief Jewishness supplies an additional and final argument on its behalf. The act of faith completed, he is thereafter and forever basically at peace, not only with God but with Israel and Torah also.

Random Thoughts

WE should cultivate the habit of not being the slaves of habit.

* * *

The radical who is a fanatic about his doxy is no less given to ancestor worship than the orthodox. The only difference is this: the orthodox believes that his ancestors were wiser than he; the radical is sure that he is wiser than his descendants will be.

* * *

No nation or ecclesia should count on being the prima donna in any future world opera, or playing solo with any future world orchestra.

* * *

It is true that the future is conditioned by the past, but many different futures can be built on the same past.

* * *

The religious doubt of the truly pious is a prayer and an expression of faith.

* * *

God preferred being challenged by Job to being defended by Job's theologian friends. (See Job 42, 8).

Better an ounce of sincere doubt than a pound of conventional theodicy.

* * *

We must have indomitable faith in human nature, if we are not to be embittered by its savageries.

* * *

The trouble with most preaching is that it is as specific as the advice that in order to avoid poverty people should have money.

* * *

Democracy is as little known socially and politically as is the Antarctic geographically.

Among the first discoverers of unknown regions of the earth were pirates bent on plunder; nowadays geographic exploration is undertaken by scientists bent on knowledge.

Democracy, however, being still in its first stages, is occasionally furthered by men who are as little interested in it as were the pirates in the regions they discovered.

The late General George S. Patton was such a man, as can be seen from the following:

"Far too much fuss," he said, "has been made regarding denazification of Germany. This Nazi thing is just like a Democratic and Republican fight."

* * *

The first human being who thought before he acted was the first theorist.

* * *

A little boy of five, on his second day in summer camp, sat at the breakfast table sobbing.

When asked by his counsellor why he was crying, he replied:

"I live in sin. The bunk where I slept has no *mezuzah.*"

The parents, who on visiting the camp were told of the incident, explained that the child had attended one of the recently established parochial schools in Brooklyn, where they stress the observance of ritual practices.

With his home, his school, his camp and the general environment all bearing down on this poor child he will probably end up as a psychiatrist or a neurotic.

* * *

G. B. Shaw came from a turbulent home. His father was a heavy drinker, a poor provider and a bad husband.

This gave a decidedly puritan bent to Shaw's character; he turned out to be a teetotaler.

Children sometimes react against their home background for ill as well as for good.

From Jewish homes where almost ideal conditions obtain, religiously and culturally, come children who rebel against Jewish life.

Their excuse is that they are fed up on Judaism.

Occasionally the reverse is true.

Mysterious, indeed, are the ways of children with parents.

* * *

The only alternative for us Jews as a people to being a dead fossil is being a living organism.

We cannot choose to be a living fossil.

* * *

In Christian religion, orthodox theology advocates the repeal of the element of sex in human nature; neo-orthodox theology, the element of power.

* * *

A true leader must be more than a sandwichman for some popular cause or ideal.

* * *

The aggregate mind is less human than the solitary mind.

This should enable us to get the main point in the story of the revelation at Mount Sinai.

The Ten Words, we are told, were ut-

tered by God in the hearing of the entire people of Israel.

That is because the people as a whole was expected to become no less morally responsible and spiritually mature than the individual human being.

This explains why the entire people was addressed in the second person singular.

* * *

Thought is so difficult that people find it easier to fight than to argue.

* * *

It took the Second World War finally to decide who had started the First World War.

* * *

Men will never achieve the promise of life so long as the only thing that unites them is the threat of death.

* * *

To be a complete person one has to be part of something superpersonal.

* * *

If wisdom were as cheap as courage, there would hardly be any need for courage.

If courage were as rare as wisdom, wisdom would be of no avail.

* * *

The defeat of Winston Churchill at the polls immediately after the war demonstrates how much easier it is to meet the challenge of war than the challenge of peace.

* * *

Whether we are saved or damned has nothing to do with the church, race or people we belong to.

All who are educable are capable of salvation; all who are uneducable are damned.

* * *

If you wonder why so many of our children outgrow their brightness, read how society systematically stultifies them by placing them in the hands of underpaid and overworked teachers.

Exposure to a college or university education results in a kind of intellectual suntan, which is only skin-deep and wears off after a year or two.

* * *

The trouble with controversies in religion and politics is not the heat but the humidity; so much of it is "all wet."

* * *

A Jewish merchant, for fear that his out-of-town customers might object to his employing Jewish help, has discovered a way of meeting their objection.

He has every one of his Jewish employees adopt Gentile names which they use during business hours and in all their correspondence.

* * *

A certain Y.M.H.A. tried to find jobs for its young men.

One of the directors was owner of a large department store.

Every time there came a request for available young men, it was accompanied by the requirement that they be blond and Nordic-looking.

* * *

A noted professor of philosophy, who happens to be a Jew, has written a book in which he describes his courses and his students.

The student whose name is Farrel is described as expecting to be taught what to believe. Finding himself convinced by every philosophy in turn, he is "seasick at the end of the course.

The one whose name is Milton Gottesman is described as expecting to be shown that there is no warrant for any belief or certainty. He got out of the course just what he expected.

The author studiously identifies Farrel as "the Irish Catholic" boy.

He as studiously avoids identifying Milton Gottesman.

Of course, you would never guess why.

M. M. K.

A Ballad of the Crusades

By FRIEDA CLARK HYMAN

Much has been written of the Crusaders and greatly have they been glorified in ballad and prose. Actually, as any student of history can testify, they were, for the most part, the scum and dregs of society. This Ballad is based on a rather obscure incident in the dark and endless martyrology of Israel. However, it could as aptly have been written about the Jews of Spires, of York or any of the more familiar martyred communities of Israel.

The story of the Ballad began as the small Jewish community of the Rhenish village of Xanten were partaking of their third Sabbath meal. Word was brought to them of the approach of the Crusaders and, of course, of their own impending doom. Their leader, the saintly Moses Ha-Kohen, immediately led the grace and added unto it the prayer of the death-bed. Then, with dignity and a self-respect worthy of their kinship to their Creator, they met death in the fire of the synagogue, a fire which they kindled with their own hands.

The sun hangs pendant o'er the trees
And veins the sky in brackish red;
Then sluggishly it fades in sleep
And draws each twisting arm to bed.

Around the Sabbath board they sit,
An extra soul their Sabbath boon;
Each man, each wife, each drowsy child
At peace within the dusk-filled room.

With gentle voice the rabbi speaks,
The sage in whom their hearts delight,
Moses Ha-Kohen, the Xanten saint,
A star above their exile night.

"Though soon she goes, our own sweet love,
Though shyly slips from mundane sight,
She shall return on faithful wings
In bridal robes of purest white.

"Tender is her parting hour,
Tearless be our souls serene,
Nor rue the tints of twilight tones
On raiment of our Sabbath Queen.

"Now let us bless our third repast,
And bless her fair and fulgent face
And let us send her forth with song,
Escort her with a bridegroom grace."

But ere the melody begins
Swiftly frightened feet draw near,
A stripling, fainting, pants their doom,
"They come, they come, with torch and spear!"

Departing angels rend their wings,
The bridal raiment droops like weeds,
White-faced Mothers clutch their babes
And Fathers shake like wind-tossed reeds.

"Our blood is wine, our flesh is meat
For lupine lips, Crusaders' maws,
Would we might rise with her this night,
Not sate the greed of sateless craws!"

But unperturbed the rabbi sings:
"Rabatai, oh bless the Lord. . . ."
The words, a living tranquil theme,
The music, an immortal chord.

"Bless His Name for now and aye."
The answer links them one to one.
The angels still their anguished hearts,
The bride awaits the constant son.

On and on until the end—
"In peace His people bless and hold. . . ."
But wait, a special Shema they sing
And "The Lord is God" Yea, sevenfold.

With courtesy they lead their bride,
The synagogue their canopy,
Oh proudly is she consecrate
'Fore heaven and eternity.

Unhurried are the wedding songs
Three stars must glow upon the dome
(Though torches blaze within the dark)
Ere bride and groom leave templed home.

Havdalah time o'er Xanten now
"Of God's salvation I am sure";
His shriven flesh the groom illumes
And separates impure from pure.

Baffled is the murd'ring horde
Furious is the foe profane
That Israel kindled in retreat
Its stronghold in Havdalah flame.

Oh Hate, your eyes cannot discern
Above the sacrificial brand
A virgin bride in lucent robes
Escorted by an angel band.

Nor can you see the groom, the host
Of women with their babes at breast,
Of men behind a priestly sage
Scaling towards the Sabbath crest.

No sun hangs pendant o'er the trees
Yet veined the sky with brackish red
Till low the sacred fire shall burn
And stars once more shine overhead.

Book Notes

TECHNIQUES OF IMPROVING GROUP RELATIONS

CONTROLLING GROUP PREJUDICE, edited by Gordon W. Allport, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, March, 1946, *Phila., Pa.,* 240 *pp.,* $2.00, *paper.* $2.50 *cloth.*

AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM, by Mark Vishniak, The Jewish Labor Committee, 1946, 129 *pp.* $2.50.

APPROXIMATELY four million dollars were spent in 1945 by Jewish "defense" organizations in America in efforts to combat anti-Semitism. A large portion of this money was spent on research. If anything can be accomplished against anti-Semitism, certainly the best way to find this antidote would be by the use of the scientific method—by investigating the nature of the phenomenon, formulating hypotheses of causation and cure, and continuous testing of results.

Progress has been made in a negative sort of way. It has been found, for example, that the energy and funds spent to answer the "distortions" by anti-Semites have been largely wasted. To Gerald L. K. Smith's charge that all Jews are Communists it is fruitless to reply that the total number of Communists is only a small proportion of the total number of Jews, hence it is logically impossible for all Jews to be Communists; or that some Jews are anti-Communists, etc. Logical answers are ineffective because anti-Semitism is mostly an irrational emotion and rational argument can rarely if ever change it. Anti-defamation work has therefore little likelihood of success.

Nevertheless it seems to me that the

"defense" organizations are pouring money into projects that can lead only to dead ends. Many of these projects are seeking the magic formula to transform anti-Semitism into tolerance and their efforts are doomed.

Controlling Group Prejudice is an indication of the direction of these efforts to combat Jew-hatred. Most of the studies are concerned with how institutions such as the school, the newspaper, labor unions, motion pictures, etc., have treated minorities in the past and how these institutions could be used against group prejudice. Although the problems of the Negroes have many elements in common with those of the Jews, there are also many dissimilarities. The discussion of the Negro problems of housing, race riots, Jim Crowism in the Army and elsewhere need not concern us here except to mention that the suggestions on what can be done about housing for Negroes were among the most practical and concrete of any in the issue.

Much stress has been laid upon the use of educational institutions to combat prejudices against ethnic and racial minorities. The Springfield Plan is cited often as a method of fighting group prejudice among school children. The schools are to be used to inculcate democratic values and respect for individuals of minority groups.

Actually little hope can be placed in formal education as a means of radically improving the situation. At best, the school is only one factor influencing the emotions and behavior of children, and as regards group prejudice the home and other environmental agencies are far more potent forces in the formulation of attitudes. In practice, schools cannot be relied upon to do an effective job. By and large teachers share the prejudices of the communities in which they live and so cannot be agents for changing community attitudes. Moreover the effectiveness of the teaching of tolerance is questionable. The platitudes usually taught do not have any lasting effects upon the habits and emotions of the youth.

What has been stated about the scant success of schools in fighting anti-Semitism, applies equally well to the National Conference of Christians and Jews. The "half million occasions when Americans who are Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews have met together to consider common concerns" with their fine talks for tolerance and mutual appreciation have not noticeably influenced the mores of Americans.

Can hope be placed in the opinion-forming agencies such as the press, motion pictures, and radio? The bulk of evidence shows that these media are not leaders in promoting tolerance, that in many instances they have promoted bigotry instead, and that they will utilize prejudice to confuse issues when they feel their interests threatened.

Can legislation be used to counteract prejudice or at least the effects of prejudice? This is the focal point of Will Maslow in his essay on "The Law and Race Relations" and is also the theme of Mark Vishniak's study, *An International Convention Against Anti-Semitism.* Both these writers are connected with Jewish "defense" organizations. Will Maslow is director of the Commission on Law and Social Action of the American Jewish Congress. Vishniak's work was published by the Jewish Labor Committee. Their writings therefore reflect the plans of action of at least a segment of Jewish organizations.

Mr. Maslow seems to concede that statutes will not change attitudes. He writes, "Whether or not the law can effect attitudes, there is no doubt that it can and should be directed at the outward effects of such attitudes. The state can properly assert: 'Your prejudices are of

no concern to us, but you shall not deprive individuals of a livelihood because of such a prejudice.' In a resourceful attack against discrimination in areas of vital concern, the law can play a significant and successful role."

Aside from the great political difficulties in enacting laws against discrimination, there are grave obstacles to the successful enforcement of such legislation.

Having a law on the books is certainly no preventive of discrimination. Mr. Maslow points out that, ironically enough, Louisiana, a Jim Crow state, has one of the most powerful sanctions against the denial of accommodations to minority groups in hotels, restaurants, public conveyances, etc. After a satisfactory law is passed it would still be the duty of interested organizations and individuals to see that it is strictly enforced.

But if you do not change attitudes you are essentially back at your starting point. Will these laws be able to withstand a depression? Will a law against discrimination in employment be potent when hundreds of people compete for a few openings in a large industrial organization? Will the lot of Jews, socially and otherwise, be improved if corporations in times of relative prosperity are forced to employ Jews against their will? Many doubts can be cast on the benefits of merely passing laws against discrimination.

Laws against the libel of minority groups need not prevent a publication from playing on race and group hatreds. *The Daily News* can just as effectively stimulate anti-Semitism and anti-Negroism by playing up news of Jewish black marketeers or Negro criminals as by attacking Jews or Negroes directly—probably even more effectively.

Vishniak's theme is the statutory fight against anti-Semitism. His "suggestions for a future memorandum" contain many random notes irrelevant to that theme. The outline history of anti-Semitism covers much space but is not germane to his theme.

It seems to be the occupational disease of lawyers and professors of law to discuss proposals for legislation solely in terms of precedents and the development of the law. Vishniak has been afflicted with this disease. He presents a summary of defamation through the ages, the history of efforts to combat it, and a criticism of these efforts. Along the way the problem of "honor" arises and so this too is dealt with. However, his facts have little direct bearing on the problem at hand.

It is surprising to find this emphasis on legalism. For a publication of a labor organization to ignore social and economic factors in a discussion of anti-Semitism is most amazing. To discuss law in the abstract, rather than in the context of a definite situation, is inadequate and useless. It represents a drain upon community resources that could better be used for other ends.

The fallacy of abstracting law from social conditions can be seen from facts given by the author himself. He grants that Germany had the kind of practice he advocates—that "offense to a group means an offense to each of its members, and that each such member had the right to consider himself as one of those attacked though not personally named." Yet the Weimar Republic, not Nazi Germany but a government long considered "model" in textbooks emphasizing abstract forms, refused to punish offenders, and expressed anti-Semitic opinions in acquitting them. Surely one should have drawn the conclusion that a law, convention, practice, or what have you, against defamation is not a sufficient solution to the problem at hand. Nevertheless Vishniak merely concludes that the convention "could have meaning and

validity only if . . . (it) were binding upon all agencies of government to the same degree; not only upon administrative agencies but upon the courts as well."

What can be done about anti-Semitism? If we place the problem in its proper perspective we see the gains made by the "defense" organizations, if gains there be, are merely temporary and petty. A major depression with its resultant tensions and animosities would most probably sweep away these "advances." This does not mean that all efforts along these lines to do something about the situation should be abandoned. A beginning must be made. Nevertheless to place much hope, energy, or money on these endeavors is to place faith in a false Messiah. It would be far better to spend the resources on Zionist construction or Jewish culture and education.

The situation calls for a radical remedy. So long as there are classes in society which profit by the exploitation of group prejudice, so long will this prejudice exist. Even if our society is changed, this change offers no guarantee that anti-Semitism will cease; it offers only an opportunity to lessen its results and its widespread character. Despite the passage of a generation in time, the existence and enforcement of laws against anti-Semitism, and a society not based upon profit, the Soviet Union is far from having abolished anti-Semitism.

Since radical change is necessary, though not sufficient, it behooves us to examine the efforts of the Jewish organizations along these lines. A number of them support "liberal" groups whose maximum program would not enact the profound changes necessary. Even if every Jew were to advocate fundamental change, a virtually impossible occurrence, we would be no nearer the solution, for Jews are only a small minority in the United States. The bleak almost black pass in which we find ourselves leads once again to Zionism as a practical solution for individual American Jews.

JACK J. DIAMOND

BOOKS RECEIVED

THE PALESTINE YEAR BOOK, Vol. II, edited by Sophie A. Udin, contains authoritative information about various aspects of Palestine life and the Zionist movement for the period from July 1, 1945 to September 25, 1946, The Zionist Organization of America, New York, 1946, 658 pp. $3.75.

PATH OF LIFE, by Samuel A. Rubin, discusses a variety of social and personal problems from a traditional Jewish viewpoint, Bloch Publishing Co., New York, 1946, 260 pp. $3.25.

FABRIC OF MY LIFE. Autobiography of a Social Pioneer, by Hannah G. Solomon, Bloch Publishing Co., New York, 1946, 263 pp. $2.50.

THE SINGING WAY, poems for Jewish Children, by Sadie Rose Weilerstein, illustrated by Jessie B. Robinson, charming verses charmingly illustrated, the Women's League of the United Synagogue of America, New York, 1946, 77 pp. $2.00.

YESODOT HA-HINNUKH HA-YEHUDI BA-AMERIKA, ed. by Zvi Scharfstein, contains essays on a variety of Jewish educational themes by leading American Jewish educators, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1946. 235 pp. $2.50.

THE LIFE OF JUDAH TOURO, by Leon Huhner, Jewish Publication Society, 1946, 307 pp. $2.00.

ISLAND IN THE ATLANTIC, by Waldo Frank, a novel with some Jewish characters. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1946, 503 pp. $3.00.

ISRAEL OF TOMORROW, ed. by Leo Jung, 21 essays by distinguished scholars on themes related to the future of Judaism, from a traditionalist viewpoint, Herald Square Press, Inc., 501 pp. $3.75.

Correspondence

A Footnote on "Brothers All"

Sirs:

"Brothers All," by Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn (*The Reconstructionist*, February 7, 1947), was an honest and straightforward appraisal of a situation from which we tend to

escape and on which many of us are blocked. It came appropriately during Brotherhood Month when members of the clergy gather together, utter "sweet nothings" and retire to the privacy of their studies with the mellow thought that they have helped usher in the Messianic era.

While meetings of the clergy of all faiths are good, while exchange of ideas and social interaction should be encouraged—these will never bring *Teme Ha-Mashiah.* Rabbi Gittelsohn told us about Protestant and Catholic chaplains and clergymen who are genuinely devoted to their fellow men (Jews among them.) I met a number of them in the Army. They are the "salt of the earth" and among the "*Zaddike Ummot Ha-olam.*" They were and still are among my closest friends. But I met others—bigoted, blind, brassy and anti-Semitic, men from the four corners of America, leaders of thousands of Christians, who preached about God and love but who were dangerously reactionary—socially, politically, religiously. For example, a Chaplain G. who came from New York. He was a priest. He was on blood-soaked Attu in the Aleutian Islands. He told me that "Father Coughlin did not have anything against Jews like you." All Father Coughlin wantd was "to destroy the power of the atheist Jews who control the press, radio, banks, etc., of the country." When I said to him that Josef Goebbels mouthed the same balderdash, he said "The Germans can't be altogether wrong." Imagine—we were fellow Americans in the American Army which was still at war with the Nazis!

It is painful to relate the incident of a Southern (Protestant) Chaplain who refused to minister to colored troops—who would not even shake hands with a Negro fellow Chaplain. There are in my possession answers to a questionnaire which I once presented to scores of Chaplains, Catholics, Protestants and those usually classified by the Army as Protestants. (At the New York Port of Embarkation it was my duty to act as orientation officer for Chaplains about to embark on Troop Transports.) Very few conceived of the Jewish people as a living, religiously creative group. Most of them felt that we had been "dead spiritually" for more than nineteen hundred years—that pogroms and suffering and gas chambers were "unfortunately" all part of a divine lesson to show the world what "happens to those who reject the true faith." And more and more. The frightening thought occurred to me that such people could accept the death of millions of innocent people and still make peace with their consciences.

Brotherhood means more than "exchanging pulpits" once a year. It demands a change in the curriculum of Theological seminaries. It cries desperately for a tie-up between expressions of "love" and some pragmatic, positive action toward people who are not Christian or not White. Above all, it calls for realism, frankness and a revaluation of the religio-educational process.

EDWARD T. SANDROW,
(formerly chaplain in the Army of the U.S.A.)

Appreciation from Junior Mizrachi Women

Sirs:

I want to thank you most heartily for your very kind comments concerning our current Affidavit Project in the February 21st issue of the *Reconstructionist.* It is most gratifying for us to see such unsolicited recognition so graciously expressed.

Lest there be any misunderstanding in the minds of your readers I would like to make clear that all funds raised through this project will be used to support D.P. children in Eretz Yisrael.

BEATRICE SUSSKIND,
Executive Director, Junior Mizrachi Women

REALITIES AND VALUES

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made by the Jacksonville Jewish Community Council.

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THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST have sponsored a "Week of Compassion" for the relief of famine areas overseas. In order to dramatize the situation, four students of Butler University have pledged themselves, as reported in *Religious News Service* of February 25, to a "starvation diet" of not more than half a pound of food daily and agreed to contribute their savings in food expense to the cause. Their diet during the week consisted entirely of link sausage, cheese, pudding, crackers, cocoa and a few chocolate bars. They lost a total of 28 pounds during their fast.

"A theatrical stunt," you say. Perhaps, but does it not put to shame all who organize banquets to raise funds for relief?